



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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NPC Statement on the Amendment Approved by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee to Admit Fresh Potatoes into the WIC Program:

Washington, D.C. – We are grateful to the Senators and staff from both sides of the aisle who reviewed the science and the history of the WIC fruit and vegetable voucher program, and supported a path forward that will allow WIC participants access to fresh potatoes.

Based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the most recent CDC consumption data, all Americans, including WIC participants, are under consuming nutritionally rich potatoes. Since potatoes are a recognized source of potassium, fiber, and folate – nutrients that are deficient in many WIC participants' diets – adding them to this important federal nutrition program is grounded in science and common sense.

Reversing the ban on fresh potatoes in the WIC program has been a priority of the U.S. potato industry for some time, and today's action by the Senate Appropriations Committee brings us one step forward to that goal. We look forward to the review of the fruit and vegetable components of the WIC food package, which we believe will maintain the valuable role of fresh potatoes in WIC participants' diets.

We are confident that allowing participants to purchase any fresh fruit or vegetable in the produce aisle reinforces WIC program's mission to provide both nutrition and nutrition education for low-income women, infants, and children who are found to be at risk. In addition, adding inexpensive, nutrient-dense potatoes to the basket will help WIC mothers stretch their WIC dollars and reduce confusion at checkout.

WIC is one of the most successful nutritional programs implemented by the federal government, and we will continue to work with the nutrition community to educate WIC participants about the value of fresh potatoes in their diets.

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The National Potato Council is a 501(c)(5) trade association created in 1948 to advocate for U.S. potato growers on federal legislative, regulatory, environmental, and trade issues.